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THE MARCH MEETING

The regular March meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects will be held on Tuesday evening, March 25, at the Architects' Club of Chicago, 1801 Prairie Avenue.

The feature of the evening will be an address on Co-operation, Bank Appraising and Its Relation to the Architect, by Preston M. Nolan, President, Organization of Appraisers for Banks.

LOW BUILDING VISIBILITY

Notwithstanding all of the propaganda being put out by governmental and other agencies in an effort to restore confidence in the building industry, at the present writing there are no indications of any immediate resumption of private construction.

A careful study of the address of John M. Gries, Chief, Division of Public Construction, Department of Commerce, at the annual meeting of the Producers' Council on February 25, seems to indicate that the figures quoted indicating the probable volume of all construction was based on optimistic estimates.

Should the Public Service Corporations, the railroads, state and governmental authorities all proceed with their construction programs as promised, as stated in our January issue, the total volume of all construction for the year 1930 may approximate the estimated volume of all construction for 1929, but it is evident that this total will not be very much influenced by the total volume of private building construction.

There are any number of reasons for this situation, not the least of which is the scarcity of money, there being no market for real estate bonds or mortgages and none in prospect, and the fact that but few individuals or corporations are able to finance construction without borrowing,

simply means that buildings will not even be planned until the financial situation clears up.

Banks and financial institutions today are carrying hundreds of millions of securities that they were compelled to take over during the stock market crash and until these securities have been liquidated or are absorbed by the investing public, financial institutions will be greatly handicapped in any effort they may put forth to aid the building industry by advancing funds for building purposes.

Another factor which enters into the problem is the fact that many owners and investors are of the opinion that labor costs are entirely too high, at least in the Chicago territory, notwithstanding the fact that buildings of any type may be constructed today at from 10% to 20% less cost than one year ago and at a less cost than at any time during the past decade, yet when the total net return on the investment is considered, in but few cases will it be found to equal the return on other investments.

In many lines of construction the country is over-built. Surveys made by national associations indicate a vacancy factor in some classes of buildings in certain localities as high as 24%, which is out of all proportion to the normal safe vacancy factor.

Shortly after the stock market slump last fall, many employers of labor got panicky and shut down operations, discharging help by the wholesale, overlooking the fact that any reduction in employment results in reducing the effective buying power and lessening the actual demand for commodities in all lines.

The quite general shutting down of building construction is forcing many concerns out of business either through voluntary liquidation or the bankruptcy courts. During the boom period of the last few years anybody could get into the game. Building supply houses of all kinds were ever ready to extend credit to anyone who could get a job whether at a profit or not. Competition for business was so keen that much work was done at cost or at an actual loss with the resulting tendency to cheapen up the quality of construction notwithstanding any supervision given.

Many of the concerns that entered the construction field during the past few years not only as dealers, but as contractors, bond houses and even architects, will be unable to survive until such times as the building business revives and it may be that at the end of one or two years when it is to be at least hoped that there will be a partial resumption of building construction, that those who are able to survive may be able to secure a reasonable profit on either the goods or the labor that they contribute to the industry. It is possible that after a period of idleness of several months that organized labor may be willing to do its share to bring about the resumption of construction by being willing to have its wages readjusted.

Of course, every economist and student of economics now realizes that high wages means high buying power, but wages may be advanced to such a point that the goods produced or the buildings constructed may not prove a profitable investment, in which event labor will not find employment.

It is the evident duty of every architect to advise his clients to proceed with needed construction now, so as to hasten as much as possible the time when the industry will be functioning somewhat near normal.

F. E. D.

HOW CAN NEW CONSTRUCTION BE FINANCED?

The big problem confronting architects today is how to finance new construction.

Under conditions which have existed for some years, an architect in addition to being a designer and a business man must be a financier and for the majority of projects must be able to secure the funds necessary to finance new construction.

During the past decade this was not usually a difficult matter owing to the popularity of bond issues, but recently

real estate bonds have fallen into disrepute and at present there is practically no market whatever for this class of securities. Many real estate bonds issued during the past ten years bearing 6% to 7% interest can be purchased for in some cases as low as forty cents on the dollar. This is a most deplorable state of affairs and obviously shows unwise financing.

Of course every architect knows of instances where bonds have been issued and sold for an amount greatly in excess of the cost of the land and the improvements. Under these conditions any deficiency in the estimated gross return of the property could only result in default of interest as well as principal.

It is alleged that at present forty-four of the forty-eight well-known real estate bond houses in Chicago have recently defaulted on either interest or principal on the issues put out by them. This state of affairs to a very large extent may be charged to the real estate bond houses direct. Many of these bond houses instead of being sound financial institutions with large resources were simply an aggregation of bond salesmen, or more properly speaking, the house itself instead of being a financial institution was simply a brokerage house. When real estate loans were made, instead of being based on real values and a conservative estimated return, were written on inflated values with the inevitable day of reckoning.

It is the Editor's belief that the day of the real estate bond issues is passed and that some other means must be found to finance new construction. It is probable that the most popular way will be a development of the co-operative building plan or the development of building corporations where the money necessary to build will be secured by the issuing of preferred and common stock. Of course, legitimate projects can secure loans for approximately 50% of the cost of the investment, but the additional funds must be supplied otherwise.

Speculative builders and investors of speculative ventures who danced must now pay the fiddler.

A SUGGESTION TO BUILDING COMMISSIONER PASCHEN

In line with President Hoover's recommendations, while awaiting a restoration of confidence and a stabilization of finances that will permit a resumption of private building construction, there is undoubtedly a great deal of necessary alteration and repair work which could be done at this time that would furnish needed employment to a portion of the building trades, and the Bulletin wishes to suggest to Building Commissioner Paschen of the City of Chicago that during the present slump in the construction program when but very little work is being done, that the city's inspection force might very well be employed in a careful checking up of the condition of all buildings and structures that are generally used by the public and that certain alterations and repairs might indeed be found to be necessary to protect life and property.

Of course, every architect has already recommended to his clients that a careful inspection be made of their buildings and structures with the view of learning if repairs or alterations are needed and have advised their clients that now is a most favorable time to have this class of work done.

If all of the alterations and repair work needed was really undertaken, it would provide employment for at least a part of the concerns equipped to handle building construction and the resulting employment of skilled labor would do much to ease up conditions existing in this field. Certainly, every building job that can be financed should be proceeded with not only because now is a most advantageous time to have this work done, but as a patriotic measure.

Let one and all do their bit and confidence will soon be restored, and of course if there is a real demand for finances, finances will be provided somehow and by some means.

THE LAST WORD

Getting out a magazine, one of whose functions it is to present photographs of recently completed work, takes on the aspect of a difficult undertaking in times when the recently completed work is conspicuous by its absence.

Boswell on one occasion was attempting to learn something of Doctor Johnson's experiences in the years before he came to London. "Sir," said the doctor, "in those years I was in poverty, and misery has no history." Similarly there

has been little architectural history to chronicle in the last few months. Now that the tide has turned, and in a few weeks the industry will again revive, we can be a little more philosophical about the catastrophe.

One of the few surviving members of that vanishing race, the Democratic party in Michigan, remarked bitterly to us yesterday, "When we have hard times in a Democratic administration, it's called a 'panic'; when we have equally hard times in a Republican term it is referred to as a 'readjustment of values'."

Whether it was a panic or a readjustment, the past few months do not constitute an era that most architects and contractors will enshrine in their memory as among the pleasant periods in their history. Building, that fragile flower, folds up its petals and wilts at the least suggestion of decreased buying, leaving all its practitioners out on a limb over a cactus patch. It is a curious fact that when prices are low and labor is available, few people care to build; they prefer to wait until increasing demand has sent prices up and made labor hard to get. The building industry instead of moving smoothly forward at an even speed, proceeds in a series of extremely powerful jerks, punctuated by periods of profound rest.

The man who can invent a solution for this condition will find a laurel wreath awaiting him; together with rich and rare rewards in the current funds of this republic. But probably this solution will be discovered two or three days after someone invents perpetual motion and gets the fourth dimension on a production basis.

In the meantime there is every reason to hope that in this March, as in others, the prospective builders will emerge from their winter sleep and proceed to get down to business. There is a lot of work that was not done last year that will have to be done in 1930; there will be new projects developing and after a few months of good business perhaps the memory of the winter of 1929 will begin to grow dim.

So, brothers, let us dust off our tee-squares and oil up our concrete mixers and get ready for the welcome March jam.

ROGER ALLEN
In March Quality Building.

TALKING SENSE

The leading editorial in the Chicago Evening Post of March 11 is worthy of reproduction in our columns. This editorial follows:

"Overdoing the Propaganda"

"Shortly after the stock market crash of last November, President Hoover called together a group of leading industrialists, business leaders and representatives of organized labor to consider ways and means of mitigating the after-effects of the shrinkage in security values. The marshaling of billions of dollars in proposed contracts, and the assurances by the conferees that they would carry on their expansion programs as if nothing had happened in Wall Street undoubtedly checked what might have been a severe financial panic.

"The publicity given those meetings and their decisions was as important a factor in maintaining public confidence as the meetings themselves. Encouraged by this initial success, the flood of prosperity items from Washington has continued to such a degree that it is a question as to whether its perpetrators are not defeating their own aims.

"Certain of the material which has been released from time to time has possessed distinct value to a business structure seeking a guide to the activities of the near future. We have had recently, for example, a remarkably frank discussion of employment levels well in advance of the formal department of labor release dates, which gave the merchandisers of the country an opportunity to gauge the public buying power and trim their inventories accordingly.

"Precisely the reverse of this, however, has been some of the data dealing with the highly important construction industry. It is no secret that certain types of building activity have failed to show the upturn that was hoped for. There is reason to believe that this condition may be remedied shortly by the normal seasonal improvement which gets under way about this time of the year, but the attempts made by the federal "pulmotor" announcements in the interval have excited more amusement than belief.

"The original announcements of public works programs at the Hoover conferences of late last year have been divided and subdivided, paraded as new facts, and expanded into

the realm of hopes and anticipations to a degree found usually only in stock promotion schemes. Nor have the figures always agreed, witness one announcement by a department leader that the value of all contracts this year might reach ten billions, only to be followed by a statement by a subordinate a few weeks later that the probable volume would be around seven billions.

"What is needed now in the way of government information on the business situation is specific data rather than propaganda. The need for the latter passed with the stabilization of the stock market."

THE FEBRUARY MEETING

In lieu of the February meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects, the Society met with the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., the Chicago Architects Club, the Evanston North Shore Association of Architects with the Chicago Chapter of the Producers' Council.

The speakers of the evening were John M. Gries, Chief of the Division of Public Construction, Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., who spoke on "Construction as a Stabilizing Influence," and Ernest J. Russell, F. A. I. A., who discussed the national building program from the architect's standpoint.

The address of Mr. Gries was listened to with great interest and has been extensively quoted in the metropolitan press. The address is too lengthy to be reproduced in full in our columns, but the following excerpts will no doubt prove of interest to our readers:

"This evening I am speaking to the creators, the designers of buildings and structures, and to the producers of the materials used in construction. You are a part—a very important part—of the great construction industry. Without you there would be no such industry.

"At the time of the President's Unemployment Conference in 1921, Mr. Hoover, then Secretary of Commerce, called construction the balance wheel of American business. This idea has received wide acceptance and today it is believed by laymen as well as by those in the industry. Whatever the reasons may be for this belief, it is true that a large construction program vitally affects many lines of business both directly and indirectly.

"Public construction, including repairs and maintenance, will involve an expenditure of about \$3,500,000,000 in the year 1930, according to estimates of federal, state, municipal and county officials. This is a large sum and has a marked effect upon industry.

"To spend \$3,500,000,000 for public construction alone calls first for expenditures for materials such as brick, cement, lumber, iron and steel, sand and gravel, granite, slate, stone, millwork, glass, paint and varnish, hardware, hollow tile, terra cotta, lime roofing materials, copper, brass, insulating materials, electrical equipment, heating equipment, lighting equipment, sanitary ware, plumbing equipment, elevators, pipes, fittings, etc. Then come carpets, rugs, draperies, furniture, cutlery, chinaware, glassware, office furniture. Going back of the items' names, there is a call for saws, machine tools, contractors' equipments, foundry products, machinery, plant equipment and raw materials. Construction means not only direct, but indirect tonnage for our transportation systems. The manufacture of brick and cement, for example, makes use of the coal that is mined at a distance. In fact, the construction dollar is dispersed among practically all the major industries, and that is at least one reason why active construction is so significant to business in general.

Past Experiences

"The drop in security values last October and November was, as you probably all know, one of the severest and most precipitate on record. Measured by the percentage of decline in security values, the total paper loss in relation to national income, and the proportion of people affected, it can be ranked beside the great financial crashes in the past.

"The financial upsets in 1837, 1857, 1873 and 1893 were the forerunners of hard times and acute distress that lasted several years each. The financial panic of 1907 was followed by a crisis in business and unemployment that was not easily forgotten.

"At the time of such panics, business men and public officials and people generally became frightened and fear fed upon fear. They seemed to have been led almost inevitably to take steps that, through their mass effects, brought widespread financial ruin. Wages were cut or employees were discharged or both. Orders were cancelled and many plants

were closed and operations of many kinds stopped. All types of construction and improvement work particularly were halted or postponed. The incomes of millions of wage-earners were stopped or reduced, retail purchases dropped off, and millions of workers were forced into unemployment. Many of them suffered physical hardships as a result of their poverty, and others had to use up their savings or went into debt. Insurance policies lapsed, thousands of business men went into bankruptcy, and thousands of children failed to complete their education.

Contrast Afforded by Present Conditions

"You all know that we acted differently at this time and that we have not wandered off into the slough of despond. What accounts for the difference? We have, of course, a much improved banking system. Stocks of goods on hand were not excessive and there had been no inflation of commodity prices as a whole. Furthermore, many progressive business men were aware of these facts, because better statistical information had been available for several years, and whenever an unhealthy condition appeared to be impending for a given commodity, such as excessive stocks or too high prices, a sane readjustment was effected. They were well aware that the active construction that followed the unemployment conferences in 1921 had very materially aided the revival of business.

"Hence it came about last autumn that many business leaders were more confident than at such times in the past, because they felt that united action could avert a major depression. Most of them realized that a reduction in employment would mean lower purchasing power, and a resulting reduction in sales and production. The idea that high wages provide high purchasing power and that low wages or no wages provide low or no purchasing power had been accepted by more business men during the last ten years than during all the 1900 years before. There had been a marked improvement in management since 1893 and 1907 with more advanced planning for programs for the physical development of industrial plants.

"The situation created by the stock market crash had a nation-wide import. Business men and public officials throughout the nation would have to co-operate in order to assure even reasonably good results. President Hoover first called in, on November 19, a group of railway presidents who were on their way to a general meeting of their group. They stated that they expected to go ahead with large programs for improvements to their road beds, terminals, rolling stock and other facilities. Soon afterwards, they stated that this contemplated program for 1930 would involve the expenditure of \$1,050,000,000, which was \$275,000,000 in excess of their comparable expenditures during the year 1929.

"On November 21 the President met with the heads of a score or more of the largest corporations of the country engaged in various leading industries. On the next day, heads of national organizations connected with construction and construction materials came together. At each of these conferences, business men recognized their responsibilities and pledged themselves not to stop or curtail their construction and maintenance, and to do their best to maintain production and employment.

"President Hoover on November 18th had requested the cabinet officers and heads of the independent establishments of the government to report on construction work under their jurisdiction that could be expedited. On November 23 he telegraphed to the governors of the states explaining the advantages of 'the energetic, yet prudent pursuit' of public works programs and asking them to report on the probable expenditures for public works in 1930 by state, municipal and county governments within jurisdiction. He asked Secretary of Commerce Lamont to aid in co-ordinating public construction programs.

"Secretary Lamont, in accordance with the President's instruction, created a division of public construction in the Department of Commerce to act as a clearing house for efforts to expedite all governmental construction programs. At the same time the President asked Mr. Julius H. Barnes, chairman of the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, to mobilize the business leadership of organized industries and trades to survey the business conditions of the country and to put whatever would be possible or necessary to preserve the momentum of the nation's productive forces. A national business survey conference accordingly was called by Mr. Barnes and Mr. William Butterworth, president of the Chamber of Commerce, to meet in Washington on December 5, to take stock of condi-

tions as they then existed, and to report on the action planned by each group.

"The reports showed that public utility, railroad and telephone companies, as well as leaders of large industrial plants, were going ahead as usual—probably increasing expenditures for constructions and equipment as compared with 1929.

"That meeting in Washington was followed by conferences called by local Chambers of Commerce and other business groups in all parts of the country. These local or regional conferences approved the programs and policies formulated at the National Conference. They decided to go ahead as usual with their own plans and outlined programs for encouraging other business men to do the same and for supporting public officials in efforts to expedite prudent public works projects. In the meantime, many of the governors were carrying out state-wide surveys, consulting not only their own department heads but mayors of municipalities, city managers, and county commissioners. Thus, facts as to the probable public works expenditures of cities and counties as well as to the state were obtained. Several governors have taken the matter up with county commissioners and other local officials at meetings at the state capital.

"The governors' reports show total estimated expenditures for public works during the year 1930 in excess of \$3,100,000,000. This includes state, municipal and county projects.

"The Federal government program will amount to some \$275,000,000, subject to some increase depending upon congressional action. The figure I have given for the Federal government does not include its contribution of eighty or more million dollars to Federal highway aid, since that was incorporated in the state estimates.

"We hope to have a better estimate of public works expenditures sometime within the near future, but we are sure of the main point, which is that the program for 1930 is larger than that of any other peace-time year.

"The public utility companies, electric light and power, manufactured gas, street railway, telephone and telegraph, plan to spend more than \$3,250,000,000 during the year 1930, according to reports submitted to the Business Survey Conference on December 5. Especially large capital investments were also reported as contemplated by the iron and steel and several other larger industries. The items that I have mentioned specifically amount to approximately \$7,000,000,000. That sum constitutes a large percentage of our total annual national investment in capital goods, the very item most subject to rapid curtailment after a panic. If, as might be the case, the total of these items for the year 1930 had shown an indicated decrease of forty, twenty, or even ten per cent, instead of an actual substantial increase, we would find the situation much less hopeful, to say the least. We would, in fact, have fallen off the road and into the ditch.

Governmental Efforts

"As a result of efforts to meet the situation rather than to gloss it over, federal, state, municipal and county governments are busy pushing projects out into the construction current daily. Many projects which had been planned had not been launched. Some were lodged on rocks. Others were in still water. Some had drifted around in a slough for months and still others had sunk. Everywhere public officials responsible for construction are initiating work that had been planned and are trying to remove restrictions so that work may go ahead uninterruptedly and at an early date.

"A public construction program involving an expenditure of \$800,000,000 for buildings means employment to tens of thousands of workmen in the building trades, and many more in the industries whose products go into structures and their furnishing and equipment. The income of these workmen is spent not only for food products, but for clothing and hundreds of other articles. And purchases of these articles mean employment in those industries.

"The federal, state and county governments plan to spend about \$1,500,000,000 for rural highways and roads. Probably two-thirds of this amount will be expended for new construction. The expenditure for highway and road building means employment in every state and practically every one of the 3,071 counties.

"The municipalities are spending about \$400,000,000 for streets; and probably \$300,000,000 for utilities such as sewers, sewage disposal plants, and water.

What the Federal Government Has Done

"The federal government, as I have indicated, foots the bills for a little more than one-tenth of all the public works construction in the country. It so happens that at this time the federal government construction activities are in an expanding phase. You all know of the ten-year program for new postoffices and the housing of other federal government activities in cities throughout the country.

Building activities under that program are not yet in full swing and the immediate objective is to push it as rapidly as possible.

"The army post housing program, the completion of the Mississippi main trunk and lateral waterway system, the Mississippi Flood Control, and the construction of adequate federal prisons are among the badly needed projects upon which the federal government had embarked, or is embarking. Although some of the work on some of these projects cannot be started for several months, and some await passage of the appropriation acts for the next fiscal year, there are numerous jobs here and there among the forty or more federal bureaus and establishments that carry out construction that can be and are being speeded up so as to provide work right now."

WHY CAN'T THE HOUSING SHORTAGE IN CHICAGO BE SATISFIED?

During the recent series of conferences of business and industrial leaders with President Hoover in Washington, the chief executive cautioned against a decrease in wages, making the point that a decrease would result in curtailing purchasing power with a subsequent curtailment of factory production, restriction of credit and further unemployment. Pleased as the construction industry is at the President's recognition of its importance as a vehicle which brings prosperity to all other industries, it finds itself stopped.

There has been much talk about the effect of the stock market speculation; many have held high money responsible. Certainly both of these factors have been contributory as the retarding agents, but the main reason for residential shortage is that the cost of building is too high. The family of the average wage earner is confronted with the selection of two alternatives in solving its housing problem. They may choose small cramped quarters, restricted in size in a modern building or ample room without refinement or conveniences and desirable location in an old building. Fifteen and twenty years ago young people started out in no less than four rooms. The average family required six or seven rooms. These rooms were of ample size. Today two or three rooms is the limit of the family budget. Many must content themselves with a one-room apartment. Even in these restricted quarters the rent is so high that in many cases it can only be met with the aid of the women of the family contributing to the budget.

Today considerably more than 25% of the average income must go for rent with very much less space. Therefore, if a family could get sufficient modern room commensurate with its income, the building industry of Chicago would not feel the pinch and labor leaders would not have to complain that over 40% of their 140,000 men are out of work and that in many cases they were looking for aid.

A number of factors enter into the high cost of building; some of them not within the control of the contractors and their labor. I want to call particular attention to several items usually lost sight of; freight transportation on raw materials, coal or fuel, and drayage from terminals or warehouses to the building site. These three items are in control of labor monopolies with whom the builders have no negotiations whatever, but the cost of these items enters terrifically in the cost of building material. Of equal importance as to why so many of our building labor is walking the streets is because of the high rate per hour he is supposed to receive (an average of \$1.62½ an hour). Few building mechanics are employed more than 150 days a year, while the man who occupies and eventually pays for the building must labor 300 days a year in order to live and pay his rent. It, therefore, stands to reason that if the building mechanic would work 250 days a year at a wage commensurate with the wage of the man who occupies his product, he could soon start his own industry. Building labor would not be a parasite on the other wage earner. The other wage earner could afford ample space and convenience in which to bring up his family. What good is \$1.75 an hour when the man who is supposed to get it has no chance to earn

it? With 56,000 building mechanics walking the streets in Chicago demanding a wage beyond the means or wages of the potential consumers, it reacts in depriving the building workmen from receiving any adequate yearly income, thereby destroying his own buying power and it destroys the buying power of the habitants of buildings because of the excess rent that they have to pay to maintain in idleness men who are only working 150 days a year.

The building mechanic should remember that his excessive wage is part of the other fellow's cost of living.

GERHARDT F. MEYNE

THE EXPOSITION BUILDINGS

"When the first tentative sketches of groupings of buildings for Chicago's '33 exposition were published we knew that the tendency was bound to be away from the orthodox, from all precedents offered by previous expositions and certainly toward new art. But I wasn't prepared for the shock given by the publication of the first sketch for the Administration building.

"My first thought was the great wall of China or the wailing wall of Jerusalem or the Bastille or a prison or cold-storage warehouse—bleak, bare and barren. Of course we did not expect columns, entablatures, cornices, arches, tracery, gargoyles or anything of that sort, but neither did we expect what was shown us. A huge inverted cigar box, a slice cut out of the side facing us, so that a corrugated washboard could be inserted on edge, the inner angles cut open, long strips of glass inserted, and there you are. The side wings are composed of three great, massive horizontal spandrels or lintels the full length of those wings, with equally long stretches of glass evidently supporting those lintels.

"The only thing I ever saw that in any way suggested those wings was a German factory with just such glass supporting heavy concrete beams, acres of it. The whole thing is very depressing. True, it achieves 'simplicity of construction,' the simplicity of some preglacial period or a scene painter's interpretation of some ancient fortification.

"Then the Travel and Transportation building is also shown. 'Metal Without a Window' is the description attached. We used to do that some thirty years ago in galvanized-iron grain elevators. Later we made a step forward and substituted great iron or tile or concrete cylinders on end, grouped together, twelve, sixteen or more, a wonderful effect by moonlight! Can that be the objective of this design? Certainly it seems so. I can't make much out of the drawing, but that description states there are two large domes without terrestrial support, hung on wires or cables from some near-by walls or poles or towers or the sky. Perhaps one is shown in the picture. I took it for a glorified gas tank.

"The American Institute of Architects admits that of the \$4,000,000,000 worth of building done in 1929 \$3,000,000,000 was as good as wasted—poor plans, ugly designs, etc. Methinks the Chicago exposition is rather tending to add a few million more to that \$3,000,000,000 of misspent money!"

F. W. FITZPATRICK

In a recent issue of The Daily News.

The Old Draftsman dropped into the Editor's office recently. Seating himself, he remarked "This is a h—l of a country. Under Cal Coolidge I was drawing \$300 per month and over time. Now what am I pulling down? Three dollars per day and commissions in the Shoe Department.

"Look at Grandpa Emerson's appropriation bills. They make Len Small's administration look like a bunch of pikers, result is the tax valuation on the little bungalow is increased three hundred per cent. And our national administration, no wonder, part injun and part ingineer."

After thus relieving himself, he passed over this clipping from R.H.L.'s Line:

"KEEP YOUR EYE ON SILENT CAL. MAYBE—

"he's thinking about choosing to run in 1932. Anyhow, he's worth watching. You notice Cal is making the front page with great regularity. And with pictures on the back page, and sometimes the third and even the second. He's moving all around the country, and for a silent man it might be he's up to something.

"He visited the squawkie works out in Hollywood, and that means he attracted the attention of the picture fans all over the country, and there's millions of 'em will be strong for Cal because he loves the talkie pictures.

"And then Cal goes to visit Bill Wrigley at Catalina Island. You may just read that in the papers and pass it by without thinking what he means. All right, we'll tell you. Bill Wrigley's w.k. Cubs are rehearsing at Catalina Island. Do you see it now? No? All right; Cal arrived at Catalina Island at the same time the Cubs did, and in the story about it, who gets the picture that goes at the very top of this exciting piece of news? The Cubs? Not on your life. The picture in all the newspapers was that of Silent Cal Coolidge. Now, what of it? Just this: That carries Cal home to the hearts of all the baseball players and the baseball fans.

"Just think of the millions of people in this country who are interested in baseball. And it looks as though right now Cal had the baseball vote tucked away in his inside pocket.

"And that isn't all that Cal's visit to Catalina Island means. He's visiting Bill Wrigley, the Chewing Gum King. Now, do you get it? Don't you see now what it means? Why, everybody that chews chewing gum will feel like sticking to Cal. Anyhow, think of a candidate for President with the chewing gum vote behind him. Think of all those people saying, 'Cal is our friend. He chews to run.' What a slogan! Gosh, you can't beat it!"

ALTITUDIMANIA

A new disease, most fatal to architecture, diagnosed as *altitudinomania*, has broken out in New York. There seems to be no cure except financial limitations, antiego serum or death. The race is to the last, so far. The parvenu automaker succeeds in having the ball on top of his flagpole higher than that of the moneymad banker's in Wall Street. And now comes the mucker, false-alarm politician, who also ran, proposing to erect a tall steel mooring mast for airships on top of his eighty or more story building. He would have the highest flagpole ball of all. The Phoebe Moron Foundation commends the kindness of this politician for constructing such a fine roosting place for pigeons.

This disease of *altitudinomania*, is the cheapest (not in money), most shoddy phase of American asininity—and that is saying something. The power of money in the hands of egotistical, uncultured owners is most devastating to the ideals of good architecture. Before this element of society attains sufficient culture to have a conception of architectural decency, the city will become the laughing stock of the civilized architectural world. There is one bright and shining hope—inevitable obsolescence will reclaim them to its own and demolition will follow. In the meantime the architect must prostitute himself to the psychosis indicated in *altitudinomania*.

A. T. NORTH

In The Passing Show.

SELF EXPLANATORY

February 13, 1930.

To The Committee Representing
The Illinois Society of Architects
In The Chicago Architectural Exhibition League.
Gentlemen:

At the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors, a letter was received from Mr. Gerald Bradbury proposing that the Exhibition League publish a Year Book.

After careful consideration and discussion, it was deemed the consensus of opinion that the Illinois Society of Architects as a member of the Exhibition League, were opposed to and will not recommend or support the publication of such a Year Book.

Yours respectfully,

WALTER A. McDOUGALL
Secretary.

Alfred Granger
Leon E. Stanhope
Thomas E. Tallmadge.

NEWS FROM PAST PRESIDENT THOMAS

Secretary Palmer recently received the following letter from Past President Stafford Fox Thomas:

Pension-Lido
Menton-Garavan,
France, Feb. 17, 1930.

My dear Palmer:

"My salutations to you," as they say here where I am

spending the winter on the French Riviera. I miss the Bulletin terribly. Have not seen one for ages. Suppose it is not forwarded because it is sent second class. The weather is fine. The band plays every day, same as St. Petersburg. Better come down here for a couple of months.

Enclosed find check for dues.

As ever,

STAFFORD FOX THOMAS.

WORTHY OF SERIOUS THOUGHT

The communication appearing in another column from William V. Hoier, Secretary of the Chicago Master Steam Fitters' Association, deserves most serious consideration by every architect. Be sure and read this communication.

CORRESPONDENCE

February 18, 1930.

Dear Mr. Davidson:

We have just completed the Sixteenth Annual Convention of the Michigan Society. A subsequent copy of our Bulletin will carry my address and the Convention program. One of the high spots is the suggestion that, if the Institute fails to take definite action on national publicity for architects at the coming Convention, there is a great possibility that the state societies may combine to form a national organization having for its sole purpose the work of informing the public concerning the architect through national publicity.

One of my acquaintances is the President of the Merchant Tailors Association, a national group. They have been studying the publicity problem for several years. They are about to enter into a contract with George Harrison Phelps, a national advertising concern which has handled several group advertising accounts. This concern takes the onus of raising the money by making personal solicitations throughout the country, charges 15% for collections and 15% for handling the advertising. They intend to raise \$1,500,000 the first year. They state that local publicity is of questionable value unless it has the background of national publicity.

We are watching with intense interest the experiment you are making in Illinois. We realize that there is no way of measuring its effect and that it must be kept up continuously to have any real value. Are your members aware that such a program must be extended over a period of years?

I wonder whether or not it would be possible to cook up a joint meeting between our Societies? Apparently we both have the same problems. Do you think the suggestion worth while?

May I take this opportunity to thank you again for the assistance you gave us in getting information for our Handbook. We are greatly indebted to you and want you to know that we appreciate your efforts in our behalf.

Very truly yours,

LANCELOT SUKERT, President,
Michigan Society of Architects.

February 19, 1930.

Mr. Lancelot Sukert, President,
Michigan Society of Architects.

My dear Mr. Sukert:

In acknowledgment of your esteemed favor of the 18th, I had planned on attending your late convention, but I am just recovering from the flu and did not dare to make the trip. I will read your report of the convention as it appears in your Bulletin with a great deal of interest.

Regarding the possibility of the state societies carrying out a national publicity campaign, in the first place you must remember that there are only a few state societies. I believe the only live ones are the Michigan, Indiana and Illinois societies. There is a state society of New York, but I believe that all they do is to get out a year book.

Many years ago when I was President of the Illinois Society I spent some time and a little energy in canvassing the field to learn the possibility of having formed state societies in a sufficient number of states to have justified the formation of a national association of state societies. I corresponded with many of the leading architects in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri and Ohio but could not develop sufficient enthusiasm to even induce them to attempt to form such societies, so I gave up the idea. If I had been a wealthy man and wanted to devote three or four years to the work, I no doubt could have in person by personal visits and contact developed enough enthusiasm to bring about what I at that time thought was a desirable organization,

but as you know from your own experience in the Michigan Society, in any organization there is probably not to exceed 5% of the members who really are enthused in doing the work of the organization. Perhaps you with your youth and enthusiasm might be able to accomplish what the writer could not do. At any rate, if there is anything that I can do to help you I shall be glad to cooperate to the best of my limited ability.

With regard to our Illinois campaign, if we can educate our law makers, our lawyers, our judges, our public officials generally relative to an appreciation of what the profession is, we feel that our campaign will have been worth while. We are making no attempt to reach the general public except as our circulars might reach those interested in building through the personal contact of our individual members.

As to the plan adopted by the Merchant Tailors Association I would question the wisdom of attempting such a campaign for the profession unless all of the copy that was mailed out was prepared by or at least approved by members of the profession and even then, I wonder if the results would justify the expense.

I am much interested in your suggestion for a joint meeting of our societies and will present your letter to the Board of Directors of the Illinois Society of Architects at its next meeting which will be on the second Tuesday of March. In the meantime, I am sending it to Brother Hall together with a copy of this letter to you, so that he can ponder over the suggestion. You will recall that Brother Hall acted as wet nurse when the Michigan Society was born and of course, he is vitally interested in its developments and problems.

Perhaps a joint meeting of the Board of Directors of the two societies might prove more worth while than to attempt a joint meeting of the two societies. Of course, members of the Society could be invited to attend, but I imagine it will be somewhat difficult to arrange for a real worth while joint meeting of the two societies as such at this time owing to financial depression and to the fact that so many of our members are really up against the problem of being able to exist until the Hoover prosperity we have heard so much about finally reaches us.

Very faithfully yours,

F. E. DAVIDSON.

CC Mr. E. S. Hall.

February 27, 1930.

Mr. Lancelot Sukert, President,
Michigan Society of Architects.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of February 18 to Mr. Davidson has been called to my attention by him. Concerning the action of the American Institute of Architects in the matter of publicity campaign, I wonder if you recall that at the last convention of the Institute, arrangements were made for the employment of a Publicity Director, and that such a director was employed and is now and has been since the last convention, conducting a campaign through the newspapers in an effort to secure wide publicity concerning the value of an architect's service. The direct mail campaign undertaken by the Illinois Society of Architects was intended as a supplement to the Institute program.

It would be of great value if groups of architects in every state would carry on a direct mail campaign of education in an effort to reach their direct personal constituencies. If campaigns were conducted in every state, every other state would benefit by them.

The Publication Committee of the Illinois Society feels that irrespective of a national campaign of education that it is very essential that there shall be separate individual state or community campaigns. All architects should lose no opportunity to address conventions, groups, and other organizations to educate into an appreciation of architectural service. Such work will lose its value if the architect presenting the argument cannot lose sight of himself and think of his profession as a whole.

We have a profession to sell to the public, not a trade. We would have to proceed along different lines than the merchant tailors. We will never be able to turn our publicity work over to a regular commercial agency. We shall always have to give it our personal attention because there are no advertising agencies who are able to appreciate the professional view point.

We shall have to follow the procedure which the American Medical Association has followed by building up a large membership in all of our professional organizations such as

will make it possible for us to hold high professional standards because we certainly cannot sell the public unless we insist on our members rendering value received. The American Medical Association has a membership of something over 100,000 with a comparatively small membership fee, yet they keep a close record of every doctor and every medical student. They know what he has written, how he has conducted his practice, if he has been arrested for any sort of offense and if so the merits of the case for or against him, and they are not slow in the discipline of their members who are neglectful of ethical practice. On account of the fact that they have maintained such high standards in their membership, they are able to continuously carry on with good taste informative campaigns concerning the value of competent medical service.

Yours very truly,
EMERY STANFORD HALL, Chairman,
Publication Committee,
Illinois Society of Architects.

Co. Mr. Davidson.

March 5, 1930.

Editor of the Bulletin:

Your monthly bulletin containing a copy of your advertising campaign literature received and read with great interest. I trust you will permit me to express a few comments in connection with our mutual problems, both as they concern the past, present and future.

The building industry, to my mind, needs some drastic readjustments from top to bottom. A campaign by your association to inspire the public to become enthusiastic about the future of the building industry can hardly be accomplished without a frank realization of what has happened in the immediate past.

It is not so long ago that real estate bonds were considered a safe and conservative investment by the public but due to unscrupulous practices of fly-by-night promoters, often disguised as Architects, and often associated with Architects, this sort of investment has lost its appeal to the investing public.

A glance at the apartments and hotels from one end of the city to the other will show a tremendous majority of new buildings have defaulted on their interests, and never before in the history of Cook County has there been so great an amount of foreclosures as today clutters the courts with their records.

I note with great interest that your subject for the next issue of the bulletin will be, "Advice, Why Take It," and to my mind advice is the greatest service an Architect performs for his clients. If his advice is not sound he is not competent in his profession. If his advice is sound, it is valuable and is a distinct service, and service is, after all, the main background of any profession.

In our profession we have lately noted with growing alarm the increasing practice of Architects and municipal bodies to include the Mechanical Trades in the General Contract, thereby shifting the responsibility from their own organization where they rightly belong, to that of the General Contractor.

The Mechanical Trades believe that it is contrary to the best interest of the public that this practice be continued, for many reasons, some of which are as follows:

The General Contractors usually act as brokers and have neither the technical or practical knowledge or experience to enable them to undertake the installation of the Mechanical Equipment Trades.

There is not to my knowledge a single General Contractor in Chicago who employs a Mechanical Engineering Department within their own organization.

The direct bid of the Mechanical Equipment Contractor to the Architect saves brokerage fee for his client which would otherwise be added by the General Contractor to his bid.

Financial risks by Contractors for Mechanical Equipment would be eliminated by dealing direct with responsible Architects.

Direct letting of contracts for Mechanical Equipment affords the Architect a better selection of competent Contractors.

Direct supervision of Mechanical Trades by the Architects obviates misunderstandings regarding the interpretations of plans and specifications.

The Mechanical Contractors and Sub-Contractors are mulcted out of Hundred of Thousands of dollars by un-

scrupulous General Contractors who are financially irresponsible and who collect the contract price and fail to pay the so-called Sub-Contractor.

Many Architects and most owners are of the opinion that when the General Contractor produces a waiver of lien from his Sub-Contractors that the General Contractor is in fact producing a receipt showing that his Sub-Contractors have been paid in full.

This is a mistaken conclusion, as the giving of a waiver of lien by a Sub-Contractor does not once in a thousand times represent the receipt of payment actually made by a General Contractor.

The majority of the General Contractors use the Sub-Contractor's capital to finance their own business. The General Contractor often takes an entire job at the actual cost of all Sub-Contractors' bids combined and after the job is completed he charges from five to fifteen per cent of the combined bids to the Sub-Contractors for so-called plaster patching, cleaning, watchman service, etc. While in reality this sum is deducted for no ethical reason but merely to compensate the General Contractors for the overhead and profit which his business requires and which he should have added to his original bid. Thereby establishing a practice which has caused the Sub-Contractors and various trades to lose faith in the General Contractor.

Every General Contractor has a certain amount of overhead and profit which he must realize but so far as the Mechanical Trades are concerned, he does not contribute any service whatsoever to the owner and often causes delays which could have been avoided if the Mechanical Trades were directly under supervision of the Architects.

The claim of the General Contractor that he can buy a job cheaper than the Architect, comes under the same category as his claim to the owner that he, the General Contractor, can save the owner all Architect's fees and commissions if the owner will let the entire job including plans to the General Contractor.

It is the belief of the members of our organization and trade that the pleasant relationship between your members and ours can best be served by the direct continuance of the present direct letting of Mechanical Trades by the Architect to the Mechanical Equipment Contractors.

We sincerely wish you success for your advertising campaign and trust that same will reward you with the results you anticipate and which your profession so richly deserves, and we trust that we may share with you the prosperity which the future holds for the building industry.

Yours very truly,

WILLIAM V. HOIER, Secretary,
Chicago Master Steam Fitters' Assn.

NEW MEMBERS

At the February meeting of the Board of Directors the following were elected members of the Illinois Society of Architects:

Herbert B. Beidler, 936 N. Michigan Avenue.

William B. Ittner, 408 Board of Education Building, St. Louis, Missouri.

Louis LeBeaume, 720 American Trust Building, St. Louis, Missouri.

Harry L. Lane, 225 N. Michigan Avenue.

Daniel W. Mead, State Journal Building, Madison, Wisconsin.

At the regular March meeting of the Board of Directors of the Society the following were elected members of the Society:

Robert O. Boller, 114 W. Tenth Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

George Wallace Carr, 333 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Philip A. Danielson, 1569 Sherman Avenue, Evanston, Illinois.

Albert Kahn, 1000 Marquette Building, Detroit, Michigan.

William J. Lindstrom, Flossmoor, Illinois.

Henry F. Wachter, 1319 Walter Street, Peru, Illinois.

Secretary Nethercutt of the Western Society of Engineers advises that there are only 9% of the membership of this organization engaged in manufacturing operations.

The Bulletin apologizes to the professional engineers of the Western Society for the error in statement appearing in an editorial article in our February issue.

*To the Members of the
Illinois Society of Architects.*

Most of you members probably agree with Emerson that: "If eyes were made for seeing, then Beauty is its own excuse for being."

But you know what invariably happens once you begin to discuss beauty in buildings with a hard-headed Babbitt. Nine times out of ten he'll pop the same old challenge at you—"well, what's it going to pay me?"

Mindful of this situation, your Society is mailing out to the regular list on March 15th the little folder enclosed with this Bulletin—"Does it pay to put BEAUTY into Buildings?"

We believe it will prove mighty helpful in promoting the cause of the recognized architect because it points out briefly why beauty does pay, and how the architect is an indispensable part of the picture.

The "bang" with which this vital message goes over will depend pretty much on the way you cooperate individually.

So won't you please write us for ten or twelve of these folders (or as many more as you can properly use) and mail or hand them personally to those men for whom they will do the most good?

Thank you!

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE.

FRANK E. DAVIDSON

JOHN REED FUGARD

LEON E. STANHOPE

EMERY STANFORD HALL, Chairman.